

No. IX.—OCCURRENCE OF THE SCAUP DUCK (*FULIGULA MARILLA*) IN NORTHERN INDIA.

An example of the Scaup duck (*Nyroca marilla*) was sent to the Society by Mr. G. J. Monahan, I.C.S. It was shot in the north of the Monghyr District, Bengal, on the 31st December 1924. The Scaup is a duck of very northern latitudes "breeding in the Palaearctic and Nearctic regions in the extreme north of Europe, Asia and America up to, if not beyond, north-east latitude 70°, in Asia." It is described as a very rare winter visitor to India. A second example, a female, was forwarded by Mr. J. C. Higgins. The bird was shot at Ipop, 15 miles south of Imphal, Manipur. The taking of this duck in the Monghyr District and in Manipur adds to the existing records of its very occasional occurrence in India.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY.

S. H. PRATER, C.M.Z.S.

5th March 1925.

No. X.—THE LENGTH ATTAINED BY AND THE HABITS OF THE GAHRIAL (*G. GANGETICUS*).

In reply to an article I recently wrote for Blackwood's Magazine on the subject of "Crocodiles"—a correspondent (whom I have never met) has sent me a letter in which he states that the biggest Gahrials he shot were in the Gogra at Fyzabad in 1920—which attained a length of 21'-6" in one case—and between 18' and 19' in the other. I would invite correspondence on this subject, and request information of authentic instances of Gahrial attaining a greater length.

My correspondent also stated that the largest specimen which was killed during August 1920, contained "besides pounds weight of native glass and metal ornaments, the entire hind-quarters of a dhob's donkey".

It is quite probable that I am completely at fault but I was always under the impression that gahrial lived exclusively on fish—and I also believed that the formation of its throat, precluded any possibility of its swallowing such huge morsels as a donkey's hind quarters, or portion of human beings and corpses. I request enlightenment on this point.

KENYA COLONY, EAST AFRICA,

C. R. S. PITMAN,

31st October 1924.

Major.

[Bangles and other human ornaments are found quite often in the stomach of the Gahrial—the name Gahrial by the way is said to be derived from the likeness of the large knob or, protuberance, seen on the snouts of old males to a *gahra* or earthen pot used by the natives of N. India. These finds are generally regarded as evidence of the reptiles having dined off a carcass. The slenderness of the jaws and the fineness of the teeth, compared with those of the mugger, are believed to restrict the gahrial to the capture of fish and smaller prey and to prevent its attacking larger quarry—but there is nothing in the structure of the reptile to prevent it from swallowing quite large mouthfuls, as has been indicated in the present instance. The stomach of a crocodile is small but this does not prevent him from making a large meal, as a great portion of the